

A NEW SPECIES OF PENAEACEAE

W. F. BARKER

(Curator, Compton Herbarium,
National Botanic Gardens, Kirstenbosch)

(With Plate XXXIII)

Brachysiphon petraeus sp. nov. Barker. (Penaeaceae).

Fruticulus parvus. *Rhizoma* crassum, in rimis saxorum coartum. *Ramuli* fere minus 24 cm. longi, vetusti infra sine foliis. *Folia* imbricata et decussata marginibus planis. *Inflorescentia* capitata, bracteis sterilibus coloratis ciliatis cincta, quam folia majoribus. *Flores* circiter 12 mm. longi tubo rubido 8 mm. longo; segmenta perianthii ovata subacuta nitide purpureo-rubicunda.

A dwarf undershrub. *Root-stock* thick, embedded in the crevices of weathered T.M.S. rocks. *Branches* shrubby, mainly from the base, usually less than 24 cm. long, erect, spreading or pendulous; older branches leafless below, with numerous leaf-scars, the upper part with imbricate, decussate leaves, erect to spreading or the lower ones sometimes recurved. *Leaves* 5—10 mm. long and 4—5 mm. broad, ovate to obovate, subacute with a dorsal apical gland, margins smooth; sessile or very shortly petiolate with two minute brown stipules and several minute brown setae in their axils. *Inflorescence* capitate, 1·5—3 cm. diam., consisting of 5—20 flowers surrounded by sterile, obovate cuneate bracts broader than the leaves and with reddish slightly ciliate margins. *Fertile bracts* tinged dark red-purple, the longest 12 mm. long and 10 mm. broad becoming progressively narrower towards the centre, from broadly cuneate to lanceolate cuneate. *Flowers* shortly petiolate; pedicels about 3 mm. long, with two linear bracteoles about 8 mm. long, attached at the centre. *Perianth* tube cylindrical, 8 mm., long and 3 mm. diam., rounded at the base, pale green tinged reddish, the colour becoming more intense upwards to dark red at the base of the segments; lobes 4—5 mm. long and 3 mm. broad, ovate sub-acute, slightly keeled in the upper half of the face, channelled towards the base, bright mauve pink, sub-erect to spreading when young, becoming erect and finally incurved when fading. *Anthers* subsessile, 1·5 mm. long and broad filaments very short; connective fleshy, white when young, fading bright reddish, a little longer than the anther cells. *Ovary* glabrous ovoid, 2 mm. long; ovules 2 in each cell, erect; style filiform 7 mm. long; stigma small globose, finally exerted just beyond the anthers.



BRACHYSIPHON PETRAEUS Barker.

1. Branch, nat. size. 2. Flower, side view x5. 3. Flower, from above x5. 4. Longitudinal section of flower x5. 5. Petal x5. 6. Stamen, side view x10. 7. Stamen, front view x10. 8. Longitudinal section of gynaecium x5. 9. Bud x5. 10. Outer sterile bract, from within x5. 11 and 12. Inner sterile bracts, from without x5. 13. Fertile bract x5. 14. Leaf, back view x5. (Rycroft 1795.) Del. W. F. Barker.



PLATE XXXIII.
Holotype sheet in Compton Herbarium.
BRACHYSIPHON PETRAEUS Barker. H. B. Rycroft 1759

HOLOTYPE. *H. B. Rycroft* 1759 in Compton Herbarium, National Botanic Gardens, Kirstenbosch.

Flowering period: September-January.

CALEDON. S.E. of Kogelberg *Stokoe* 7973 (BOL); Rooi Els *Compton* 17529 (NBG), *Esterhuysen* 14122 (BOL), *Leighton* 1449 (BOL); Rooi Els River *Stokoe* (BOL 17343); Hazel Peak near Rooi Els *Davis* (SAM 65407); Mts. between Rooi Els River and Palmiet River *Stokoe* 530 (NBG, SAM and BOL); Mts. near Rooi Els and Hangklip *Stokoe* (SAM 52452); Hangklip Estates *Stokoe* (SAM 63584); Mt. N. of Pringle Bay *Rycroft* 1234 (NBG); Mountain slopes S.W. of Pringle Peak, growing only in T.M.S. rock crevices *Rycroft* 1759 (Holotype NBG); Pringle East Peak *Esterhuysen* 20399, 20726 (BOL); Pringle Peak *Macpherson* s.n. (NBG); Palmiet River Mouth *Compton* 12363 (NBG), *Salter* 5182 (K and BM), *van Rensburg* 2159 (BOL), *Pillans* 8223 (BOL); Palmiet River Valley *Stokoe* 8668 (BOL), *Stokoe* (SAM 65793), *Stokoe* (SAM 56519); Palmiet River *Martin* 384 (NBG); Palmiet River Mts. *Stokoe* (SAM 56246); Platteberg and Paardeberg near Palmiet River Mouth *Stokoe* 9216 (BOL); Kleinmond *Stokoe* (BOL 17538), *Compton* 3399 (BOL), *Compton* 3400 (BOL); Palmiet River Mts. Oudebosch *Stokoe* (SAM 65794); Near Elgin between Grabouw and the Paardeberg *Stokoe* (SAM 63583); Palmiet River, Elgin *Stokoe* 8440 (BOL).

Our first record of this charming little plant was made by Mr. T. P. *Stokoe* in 1922, on the mountains between Rooi Els River and the Palmiet River Mouth, and though it has been collected on numerous occasions since, by many different collectors, it has been left to languish without a name in the incertae of the Peninsula Herbaria. In Nov. 1954, Professor H. B. *Rycroft* brought good fresh material from Pringle Peak and suggested that it should be described, sketches were made at the time and the accompanying plate has been prepared from them.

It is allied to *Brachysiphon speciosus* Sond. in the set of the leaves and the congestion of the flowers into distinct heads surrounded by sterile bracts, but it is much less robust in habit, and its leaves are smooth-edged. Its habitat which suggested its name (growing among rocks) is also very distinctive, as it is known to occur only in crevices of weathered T.M.S. rocks, and it is often found jutting from vertical rock faces. This specialized habitat seems to be one of the controlling factors in its distribution, as it is recorded from altitudes varying from almost sea level to three thousand feet.

From present records it appears to be confined to the mountains West of Bot River. *Brachysiphon rupestris* Sond. is also found growing in the clefts of rock, but it seems to be confined to the mountains East of Bot River, is a much more dwarf plant, and does not have its flowers congested into distinct heads.